

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DACCA 02109 220637Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 ACDA-07
SCS-03 SCA-01 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 AID-05 /087 W
-----220642Z 059903 /13/47
O 211500Z APR 77 ZFF-6 CORRECTED COPY FOR MCN/MRN
FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4330
INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 3288
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA IMMEDIATE
CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

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CORRECTED COPY-MRN 2109 VICE 00000

E.O. GDS
TAGS PINT BG
SUBJECT: ZIA ASSUMES PRESIDENCY
ACTION: SECSTATE WASHINGTON NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO: AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA IMMEDIATE
CINCPAC HONOLULU IMMEDIATE

1. AT 1700 HOURS LOCAL MAJOR GENERAL ZIAUR RAHMAN WAS SWORN
IN AS PRESIDENT OF BANGLADESH. HE TOOK OVER FROM PRESIDENT
SAYEM WHO HAD RESIGNED ON GROUNDS OF "ILL HEALTH" CHANGE WAS AN-
NOUNCED OVER RADIO AT 1800 LOCAL.

2. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION SECRETARY IT IS UNCLEAR AT THIS MOMENT
WHETHER ZIA WILL RETAIN (1) CHIEF MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATOR POSITION
AND (2) POST AS CHIEF OF ARMY STAFF. HOWEVER, SO FAR AS FUNCTIONING
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OF BANGLADESH GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED THIS IS NOT KEY.

3. AMBASSADOR THIS EVENING TALKING SEPARATELY TO BOTH AIR FORCE
AND NAVY CHIEFS OF STAFF, WHO ARE ALSO DEPUTY CHIEF MARTIAL LAW
ADMINISTRATORS, WAS TOLD THAT, ALTHOUGH CHANGE CAME WITH
SUDDENNESS,

IT WAS DONE WITH THEIR CONCURRENCE.

4. SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF KEY OFFICIALS WERE PRESENT AT QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY RECEPTION (INCLUDING ADMIRAL KHAN AND AIR MARSHAL MAHMOOD MENTIONED IN PRECEDING PARAGRAPH). BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER TOASTED PRESIDENT ZIAUR RAHMAN; ADMIRAL KHAN, SENIOR BDG OFFICIAL PRESENT RESPONDED TO TOAST. ADMIRAL AND PROMINENT CIVILIANS ALSO PRESENT SEEMED TO GREET CHANGE IN ROUTINE MANNER. IT HAD BEEN ASSUMED BY MANY, SO THEY IMPLIED, THAT THIS CHANGE WOULD TAKE PLACE SOONER OR LATER AND THUS THERE WAS LITTLE SURPRISE EXPRESSED.

5. DACCA ITSELF APPEARS COMPLETELY QUIET ALTHOUGH NEWS HAS BEEN PUBLIC FOR SEVERAL HOURS. NO DANGER TO AMERICANS IS APPARENT OR ANTICIPATED. MAHMOOD TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT BDG DID NOT EXPECT ANY TROUBLE OR "AT LEAST NOTHING WE CANNOT HANDLE".

6. WE ARE NOT CLEAR WHAT PRECIPITATED ZIA'S MOVE AT THIS TIME. MAHMOOD CONFIRMED THAT SAYEM HAS, IN FACT, BEEN ILL FOR SEVERAL DAYS, BUT SAID, IN EFFECT, THAT PRESENT ILLNESS IN ITSELF DID NOT SEEM SERIOUS ENOUGH TO RELIEVE HIM OF HIS POSITION.
MASTERS

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NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 21-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Subject: ZIA ASSUMES PRESIDENCY ACTION: SECSTATE WASHINGTON NIACT IMMEDIATE INFO: AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE
TAGS: PINT, BG, PINT, (RAHMAN, ZIAUR)
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